

A Family History Over Three Generations

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Purpose of Thesis

History has always been recorded in an attempt to preserve the past and instruct the future. The following is an attempt to do the same. It contains a collection of stories from the lives of: Claire Mary Rauf Henry (May 5, 1906 to present), her niece Phyllis Paula O'dom Scherra (January 24, 1924 to present) and Phyllis' daughter Emily Marie Scherra Lemming (November, 11 1949 to present). These stories are meant to capture the essence of the people telling them, and the times they endured. They are an attempt to allow my grandchildren the opportunity to know and love the people that I know and love; people that are very much a part of me, and, consequently very much a part of them and all their descendants.

Aunt Claire interview dates: 3-9-96 and 3-24-96

Phyllis interview dates: 3-6-96 and 3-8-96

Emily interview dates: 3-4-96 and 3-5-96

Part I

Born on May 4, 1906, Claire Mary Rauf Henry was the youngest child in a family of eight children. Her oldest brother, George, was born in 1891, followed by Dot, Herman, Therese, Celia (Bess), and Al. Their mother, whose only known name is her married name, Wilhelmina Rauf, was born in 1866 in Bersenbruke, Germany. It was in Germany that she met her husband, August Rauf, born in 1871.

In approximately 1888, August and his wife left Germany for America along with August's sisters Cary and May, his brother George, and Wilhelmina's two brothers, Herman and Henry. Upon reaching the new world, they began their westward trek. August and Wilhelmina settled in the German Catholic community of Covington, Kentucky along with her brother Herman. Henry and his wife went to Minnesota, where he became a successful farmer. After a period of alcoholism and unemployment, Herman joined him there.

As a child, Claire attended a Catholic school known as St. Johns. After graduating the eighth grade, she stayed at home to help with housework as her mother, who was becoming increasingly ill, was unable to maintain the house. Several years later, she attended the Notre Dame Academy for embroidery, but stayed in the home with her mother until she got married.

At the age of 18, Claire and her husband William Henry moved to a neighborhood in Covington not far from the one she grew up in. One year after their marriage, they had their first child, Bill. Their second son, Thomas, followed two years and three months later.

Claire stayed in the home, taking care of her sons, until the stock market crash in 1929. They were in need of money, and, luckily, Claire's brother-in-law was able to find her a job as a seamstress. She did embroidery work for the company he worked at for the next twenty years of her life. After her husband's death in 1948, Claire moved back into the house she grew up in, where her sisters Dot and Marie were living. She has been in Covington since.

Chapter 1

Parents

I think my mother didn't like me from the day I was born. I always thought she wanted four boys and four girls. She had the three boys, then I came along and I was the odd girl. It didn't matter what I did, it was always wrong. Even when I was older, when I lived down on ninth and main, I used to go out once a week and help her because she was an invalid. Now, I couldn't drive out in a minute, I had never learned to drive. So, I had to walk out there with one of my kids in a stroller and one walking behind me. It didn't matter what time I'd get out there, she'd always say, "Now couldn't you get out here a little faster." My goodness, she'd ball me out. I was always on the wrong end no matter what.

Mom was the boss of the house. Whatever she said, you did. She never had a job outside the home, oh no, she had enough work with us kids and the house. You didn't hear of women working in those days, never. My generation did, all my sisters and myself,

and all my friends did. But not then. But, oh my, was she a stern woman. The only time we would get our way was when we sat down at the table. You know how kids fuss over dinner. "I don't like this" or "I don't like that." Well, when she put the meal on the table, if we didn't like it, she'd just tell us to have bread and butter instead.

It was when I was 14 or 15 that she started getting sick. She had it so many years. I think they called it palsy back then, but, she had it just like they have Parkinson's now. She was an invalid. If the house was on fire, she couldn't even get out of bed by herself. I remember, you'd have to help her with her lunch, and when you put her to bed, you'd have to sit her down in the bed and pick up her legs, then the rest of her. It was just like she was an infant. My oldest sister, Dot, she never married. She was the one that stayed home to take care of her in the end.

My father, August Rauf, oh, he was just the best person that ever lived. He really was. He liked all us kids, and all the kids liked him. He was an orphan over in Germany from the time he was 14 or 15. After his folks died, he went to work for different farmers and the like until he came over around 1888.

He was the foreman of the car cleaners for the C & O railroad for thirty three years. When the trains came into the station, pop'd make sure they were ready for the next trip. They'd go through, straightening up cars, passing the time talking with all the black men that were waiters and that on the train.

When they got to the dining car, they'd go through the icebox,

and they'd restock it. Well, they had cream for coffee in those days. It was all cream, it wasn't any milk. If he found any in the icebox, he'd get it and take it home. Well, if us kids saw him swinging that bucket on his way up the street, we knew he had cream in there, boy, and we'd get ice cream. I can always remember that. He'd put it down in ice and turn it back and forth, and we'd have ice cream. Yeah, I always said he was the best person that ever lived.

Chapter 2 Childhood

When I was a kid, I think I was always in trouble for something, and I never did anything wrong that I knew of, that was the worst of it. We were scared to do something wrong. I can remember once around Christmas time, Al and I came home for lunch, and my mother was going out shopping. She'd say, "Now don't go in that living room." That was where she stored the presents. All we had to do was open the door and walk in, but we didn't dare. Al climbed up on the piano to look through that window above the door instead. That's the craziest thing that ever was. You tell your kids that now, and they'd think you were crazy. Yeah, that was something. But back then, you just did what your folks said, and that was that.

Back then, everything you did was like a punishment, whether you were in trouble or not. We always had to clean or do this or do that. We always had chores. Dishes, do the dishes. But the

brothers, no, our brothers never did any dishes. The only thing I can remember the boys doing was my bother George, he liked to clean windows. But we did everything else. Saturday mornings we had to clean, sweep the carpets, and dust. In those days, too, washing and ironing was a chore. It was all by hand. That was great. You had these old flat irons and you'd heat them on the stove. One'd be getting hot, and you'd pick it up with a pot holder, iron with that for a while, then put it back on the stove and use the other hot one. You don't know what you were missing.

Another thing we had to do was go get ice for the icebox. We went down to the brewery with a coaster wagon, all the kids in the neighborhood, you'd see them coming down with their little wagons, line up, and put a block of ice in. Before you left home, mom'd say, "Now hurry back with it so half of it don't melt on the way," and she'd give you an old rag to put over the top of it, so the sun wouldn't shine on it. Oh, you kids don't know what it was all about. And we didn't get paid like kids today. One time my brother, I think it was Herman, wanted to give me a nickel for some chore he wanted me to do. My mother said, I'll never forget, "You don't have to pay her for doing that, that's her job." She wouldn't let him give me a nickel! That was something else. But, that's how it was. You never heard of kids getting a weekly allowance, no way. Gracious, there was no such thing.

When I was a kid, we all, of course, believed in Santy Claus. Every Christmas Eve, pop'd tell us he had to go somewhere. Well, pop never left the house after dark. He'd sneak go out to this

garage thing out in the back where he kept the tree. My father would carry that tree, and that tree was floor to ceiling, in through the front door. Then, he'd set it up, get all the stuff out, and decorate that whole tree. We'd all be sitting in the dining room singing Christmas carols, and waiting for Santy Claus to come. The last thing he'd do was light the candles that we used to have as ornaments on the tree. When we could see the light coming from that room, someone would say, "Oh, it's getting light. Santy Claus must be there." Then pop'd come back from wherever he was.

Chapter 3 School

I started school in kindergarten. It was public, I guess you'd call it. Our teacher was Miss Daisy. All you did there was play stuff, like making little loops and putting them together. That kindergarten was there even after Phyllis and my kids went to it. I laugh about it now, but when they'd get a day off or a holy day at St. John's, where would all the kids go? They'd go to kindergarten to visit Miss Daisy, they always liked it so well.

Then I went to St. John's up through eighth grade. We'd walk to school every day. At lunch time, we had to walk back home for lunch. After lunch, we'd walk back to school. At the end of the day, we'd walk back home again. Do you know, we'd go to school in anything. Even if snow was up to your knees, we never got off. Now, if there's half an inch of snow, they don't go.

The area where we lived was a German settlement. All the people that lived in our area were German, so we were taught German in school. About fourth grade, the war (WWI) started, and boy, you couldn't speak German or anything. They came to the schools and wouldn't allow them to teach German anymore. The priest at the school, Father Goble was his name, he was from Germany. Some anti-German group went to his house a couple of times and really got after him. They kept at him until the war was over, too. But, they never went back to teaching German. I always kidded about going back to school, and they'd say, "Well, what would you take?" I said I'd take German. I'd like to get back into that.

I didn't really go to high school. After eighth grade, I stayed home and helped my mother. There was plenty of work to do there, and my mother was starting to get sick. When I was fifteen or so, I went to Notre Dame academy for embroidery work. That was about it. Now, my sister Bess went to high school. She took a business course over in Cincinnati somewhere. Some of the girls went to the convent after eighth grade. I think two girls out of the twenty in my class went. Not too many kids went on to high school in those days. A lot of the boys went and got jobs after eighth grade. That's what my brothers did. There was a tailoring place right close to home. George went there and became a presser. My brother Herman went in the shoe factory and made shoes. And Al, that was many years later because he was down the line, he became a jeweler and made jewelry. There were always different trades to go in after eighth grade.

A lot of girls stayed home after eighth grade, so I always had girlfriends to spend time with. Usually, we'd just sit and talk or sew together or something. Once in a while, we'd go to matinees on Sunday afternoons. Then, you'd get yourself a chocolate sundae at the ice cream shop. That and we'd go dancing. Oh, we all loved to dance. Everybody danced. There was a lot of places to go dancing, too, down south of Cincinnati. Almost every weekend in the summertime, six of us girls would go dancing on the Island Queen back when it was still running. That was the boat that went out to Coney Island. We'd dance on the way to Coney Island, stay on the boat, and dance on the way back. We'd go home, eat supper, get cleaned up, then go back and do the same thing.

Chapter 4 Marriage

Most of the kids would have Halloween parties. They always had mask parties where we'd go and dance. That's where I met William, my husband when I was 18. We used to go to those things in groups and dance in groups. Well, we were in the same group, and a friend introduced me to him. He asked me to dance a couple of times that night. Afterwards, he'd call or I'd run in to him somewhere, and he'd ask me to go out. So we'd go out with a group to go dancing, or what have you. We went out for about a year, I guess, before we got married. I was about twenty, which was funny because all my brothers were thirty or older when they got married.

After we got married, we stayed around here, around Covington.

A year after our marriage, we had Bill, then Thomas two years and three months later. Then, I stayed home with the kids and the house, and I'd help mom, like I said; about once a week I'd go out there. William worked for an advertising place, selling advertisement.

The depression came right about the time I was pregnant with Tom. Boy did it ever effect us. There was no work, you couldn't buy a job. My husband was out of work, everybody was out of work. We had to skimp and save and put together a meal with a couple of bucks. It was bad. We didn't have everything we wanted, but we got along. I guess we were better off than some. That was when you had a little saved up and you went off it.

It's funny, but that's when I got my first job. My sister Threse's husband found a job I could do at home so that I could watch my boys at the same time. You didn't leave them like they do some kids now. His company made these elastic hose that people would wear, and he was looking for help to finish them. They could only work so far on the machine, then you had to pick up those stitches, work around the top and bottom, and then you had to cut in a heel for them, all by hand. So, I did that, and I made \$13.50 a week. That went on even during the worst part of the depression, they just weren't that busy. Then, when the boys were older, I went in to the company and worked there. I did that for twenty years, and I loved it.

So that's what I did. I raised my family and worked, doing embroidery. When William died in 1948, I moved back to the old

house where Dot was. Both mom and pop were dead then, and pop had left the house to Dot. I moved back in there with Dot. I remember, that was about the time when, right across the street from us, in a three room cottage that used to be pop's as well, Phyllis and her husband were about to have their first baby.

Part II

Mary Phyllis Paula O'dom Scherra was born on January 14, 1924 in Covington, Kentucky. Her mother wanted to name her Phyllis Paula, but the priest baptizing her insisted on the inclusion of Mary, so it was added to the front of her name.

Her mother, Marie Caroline Rauf, was born in 1896. Claire's older sister, she was one of eight children. For most of her adult life, she was a seamstress in a tailoring shop for men's clothes. There, she met a presser named Joseph Ferdinand O'dom who would become her husband.

Joseph O'dom, born in 1899, was one of six children including Agnes, Ernest, Margaret, Emma, and Clarence. He spent most of his life in the Cincinnati, Ohio and Covington, Kentucky area, often unable to hold a job and drunk most of the time. He left Marie before Phyllis was born. He lived with them off and on until they were finally divorced in 1946 after nearly twenty years of marriage.

Though her father was absent for a large part of her life, she was surrounded by family. Phyllis grew up in the same house her mother had grown up in, sharing it with her grandparents and her Aunt Dot.

She attended St. John's Catholic school until eighth grade. After graduating from public high school in 1942, she worked as an artist for department stores. In 1946, she married Frank Scherra. They bought a house across the street from the house Phyllis had grown up in Covington. Phyllis stopped working to stay home and care for her four children, Marilyn, Emily, Jenny, and Tony, while

Frank worked two jobs to support them.

Chapter 1 Parents

I didn't have a normal family life. Before I was four years old, my father was never around. Well, I guess I saw him when I was real little. Sometimes my mother would meet with him. Whether she was hoping to get back with him, I don't know. But it seems like we would go to my father's sisters to visit him, and they would be together there. So I kind of knew him, but he wasn't around when I was born. I think when I was about four years old, during prohibition, we were all together for, oh, I don't think it was even a year. I think he must have just finished service with the army. One day I was sitting on the front steps of our house, and the police came and got my father for bootlegging.

Anyway, we weren't together very long then. When I was in about the eighth grade, we were together again for a while. We were together then until he joined the navy during World War II. After the war, they took up again and lived at my grandparents. So, from the time I was in eighth grade to the time I got married we were together, but he was off in the navy for part of that time.

During that time, we lived in this old homestead in Covington where my grandparents had lived all their married lives. When my Grandpa died in 1945 my grandmother was already gone. She had died about ten years earlier, so he left the house to Aunt Dot. Well, my dad wanted to buy that house, but he never was trustworthy or

anything, and Aunt Dot wouldn't sell it to him. He got upset, and left us for good. After that, my parents got a divorce, and my dad remarried in California.

Chapter 2 Childhood

When I was a little girl, we used to play "O'leary". You said, "One, two, three, O'Leary," then you'd throw your leg over the ball. And after you'd get up to ten, you'd start over again, and this time you'd do O'Leary, O'Leary, and try to do it two times, and then three times. I liked stuff like that, to see how much I could do. We'd jump rope a lot, or skate, play with dolls, things like that. I used to have a little old swing in the back yard on the grape arbor, and I played on that a lot. I rode bikes some, but I never had my own. I used my cousins. Most of anything, I used to like to draw and color and stuff like that.

At night, I used to love to just sit and listen to the radio and play cards. We didn't have a television until 1949. Before that we'd listen to the radio a night, and it was nice. They used to have a lot of little half hour comedy shows like Amos and Andy and Jack Benny. I think the world would be a better place if the world was still like that. I think television has been really bad.

When I was older, we went to movies quite a bit. Shirley Temple movies were about the first one's I saw. I saw Gone With the Wind when I was real young. I'd just get money from my mother, and go with some friends. In seventh, eighth, and ninth grade, a

group of us girls had this little club. We'd take turns going to a different one's house maybe once a week and just talk. Every time we went we always had jello for a snack!

I never had any chores or anything to do. I was the only child among all these older people, and I was kind of spoiled. Sometimes, my mother'd ask me to start supper, but I never did have too much responsibility in that line. I never really got in trouble, either. There were a couple of times, we'd be out playing late, to where everybody was starting to get a little worried because it was later that we were supposed to be out and getting close to supper time. I'd get scolded that I shouldn't be out that late. Other times, I guess I'd get scolded by my mom, or my grandfather'd probably say, "You shouldn't be doing that." But that was about it. We were good kids.

Chapter 3 School

I wasn't a very good student. What I remember most was there was a couple of girls that tormented me and bullied me. They'd wait for me after school. Walking home they'd come hit me, and I can remember one of them taking my hat and throwing it down the sewer, just to be mean. I was scared of these two girls, so finally one day I wised up and started to come home a different way.

Another terrible thing about school was getting my report card. The pastor always came to the school once a month to hand

them out. He'd call out each name, and you'd go up and get your report card when he called you. That pastor was the same one who hung that Mary on my name, and every time he came to school and called me for my report card, he would say, "Phyllis, now that's a horse's name." I was just a kid and here he is up in front of the class making fun of my name!

When I graduated from the eighth grade, other kids were making plans on where they were going to go to high school. For some reason or other, I wasn't doing that. My mom was working every day and my dad was drunk every day, and we weren't even thinking about what I was going to do. All summer, we didn't worry about it. Then, in the fall, all the other kids were going back to school, and it occurred to us that I hadn't decided on a high school to go to. I remember my mother running around with me on the bus to find out which public school I was supposed to be at and to try to enroll me in it on the day school was starting. But, I didn't like high school at all, except for art. I was one of the artists for the annual in my senior year. I'd draw a picture for each section, like a basketball player for sports, or something like that. I liked that pretty well, and I had a really good art teacher. Miss Angela Thiel was my art teacher in high school. She probably had more of an influence on me than anyone else.

Chapter 4 **Employment**

When I graduated high school in 1942, Miss Thiel told me

that J.C.Penny's was looking for somebody to make price cards and do window dressing and display for their store, and I went down there and got that job. I worked there for two years, and I started at a quarter an hour.

Then the war started. Because all the men were leaving for the war, this one big store in Cincinnati was advertising for window trimmers, so I went over and got a job there. I didn't get paid as much as the men, but it was more than I was making before. Now I don't know if that's because they were there for a long time before they left or just because they were men, but I know the men made a lot more.

I worked there about two years, then quit when I married Frank in 1946. If I had it to do over, I'd have kept working. Back then, I had some screwy idea deep in my mind that my parents marriage didn't work because my mother worked, so my father wouldn't assume any responsibility. I thought, if I work, then Frank wouldn't have any incentive. It was stupid. But, not only that, at that time, all women in my position stayed home.

Chapter 5

Marriage

Frank and I were introduced by these long time friends of my father's family, Grace and Al. After Frank was off to war, they just happened to move into the same house that Frank's family lived in. Grace invited me over when Frank was coming home on furlough. Then, he took it from there. His family had this camp, and they

were planning on going to it the next day, and he asked me to go along. I thought he was nice looking, and he seemed to be a nice fellow. I was impressed by the fact that he didn't drink like my father. He had a job and held a job, that kind of stuff impressed me. So, I went with him to the camp the next day.

The day after that, he went back to the army. Then we corresponded, and he came home a time or two before the war was over. That went on not quite a year, up until the war ended. We went out for maybe six months after he came back from the war before we got married.

Our first house was this little three room cottage right across the street from the old homestead. It had a dirt basement, no heat, and no hot water. My grandfather had owned it for years and years, and different members of his family, Aunt Claire, lived in it for a long time. When I was born, my mother lived in it. Well, my grandfather died just before we got married, and they were going to sell this little house. So, we bought it for \$2500. Two years later, Marilyn was born. We had Emily a year later, then Jenny about three years later, and Tony came four years after that, when I was thirty two.

When Marilyn was in the seventh grade, Frank started working two jobs, and did that until he retired. He'd work eight hours a day as a foreman at a machine shop, then he'd work four hours or so each night, running some kind of a machine. We weren't poor, but we weren't well off. We were very thrifty. We worked hard to raise our kids right, and did the best we could.

Part III

Emily Marie Scherra Lemming was born on November 21, 1949 at St. Elizabeth's hospital in Covington, Kentucky. She spent the first part of her youth in Covington. When her father opened his own machine shop, they moved to Delhi, Ohio.

A year after graduating high school, she decided to attend college at the University of Cincinnati for a degree in elementary education. During this time, she met her future husband, Rich Lemming. They were married in September of 1971.

After marriage, they lived in Reading, Ohio from where she commuted to school and he commuted to his job at Montgomery Wards. In March of 1972, Emily finished her collegiate career with a degree in elementary education. She substitute taught for the remainder of the school year, and had her first child, Chris, on July 7, 1972.

In the following October, they moved to Vincennes after Rich was transferred there. She stayed at home with the baby and worked part time at a fabric store. After a year and a half, they moved to Piqua, Ohio, where they had their second child in September of 1974. One year later, Emily got an afternoon kindergarten teaching job, making \$4000 a year.

Rich received another transfer in March of 1976, this time to Richmond, Indiana. Emily commuted to Piqua to finish the year out, and found a job teaching a morning kindergarten at Warner elementary. In her second year there, it went to full time with a salary of \$8500 a year. In 1978, Emily had twin daughters, Kim and Pam.

Warner closed after five years, and Emily was placed in Vale elementary to teach first grade. After two years at Vale, she took a job at a Seton Catholic school teaching first grade along with a \$6000 a year pay cut in order to be at the school her children were attending. Two years later, she became the principal of Seton. Since leaving that position in 1991, she has been a nursing adviser at Indiana University East, principal at St. Lawrence elementary, and is now starting a principal job at St. Gabrielle elementary.

Chapter 1

Childhood

Across the street from our house in Covington was this house where my maternal grandmother, my Aunt Dot, and my Aunt Claire lived. We'd go over there on summer Saturday evenings and sit in the front yard. Almost everybody, in the summers, pulled their lawn chairs out and sat either on the side walk in front of their house or in their side yards. And we'd get a nickel or a penny or something from one of our aunts or our grandma. Then we'd go up to the corner store and buy a piece of candy, or, with a nickel, you could get a popsickle. That was entertainment.

On Sundays we'd get in the car and go to my dad's mother's. Sandra, my cousin, and her mom and dad lived in the upstairs of those grandparents' house. So, we'd go over every Sunday, and we'd play with Sandra. We always liked going there, because every once in a while, my Grandfather would give us a dollar bill. That was really all the money we saw back then. With all my aunts and my Grandmother across the street, we'd always get a nickel here or a

dime there, but that was it.

In the summer, instead of visiting them at their house, we'd all go out to the camp. The camp was an old house Grandpa Scherra had on the Miami river. Just about all of my dad's brothers and sisters would go out there with their kids, too. We'd go out there and wade in the river or play in the dirt. The house was up on stilts, and we'd sit under the house and just play in the dirt. That was probably the closest thing to a picnic I did as a kid.

It seems like we always had chores. I can remember doing dishes when I was real little. Every Saturday, we had cleaning to do in the morning: sweeping the floor, vacuuming, cleaning bathrooms, and ironing. Even when I was real, real little we had ironing. We'd iron everything, including handkerchiefs. We never had tissues, we just used hankies. I bet I'd stand and iron fifty handkerchiefs at a time. That was a big job every week.

There was a little corner grocery store at the top of our street. We had a big metal, wire pull cart, and we'd walk up to the corner grocery with that thing, then walk our groceries home in it. Even when we lived in Delhi, when we'd need milk, we'd walk a long way, down to the bottom of Delhi Pike, and buy a couple gallons of milk. That was when they were still in glass bottles, so they were heavy. We did that every day. Usually, Marilyn, Jenny, and I would all walk down there, and then we'd share carrying the bottles on the way home.

I used to get in trouble for fighting with Marilyn a lot. That, and saying nasty words, we'd get our mouth washed out for

that. We'd get in big trouble for not finishing what was on our plate, too. I remember sitting at the kitchen table crying for what seemed like forever because I didn't want to eat green beans. And if I didn't eat those green beans, I didn't get anything else that night. I didn't get any desert, I didn't get any snacks, nothing. Sometimes, we got sat in a chair. My mother'd put a chair facing the wall, and we'd have to sit there, probably ten or fifteen minutes and say a certain number of Hail Marys. I can remember one time my mother got so mad at me, that she made me go sit on the cellar stairs and shut the hatch door. That was the worst punishment we got, because we were all afraid of the cellar.

Chapter 2

School

In kindergarten, we had snacks every day. This is the amazing thing. The school was on the main street, and it was a big street, real busy compared to a neighborhood street. Everyday, the kindergarten teacher would pick a couple of kids, and they'd walk around the corner to the supermarket to get the snack! Me and my friend Margy got picked to do that a lot, because we liked to go. We'd get our coats and everything on, even in bad weather, and we'd walk up to the supermarket. The teacher called ahead, and they'd have the snacks there ready for us to pick up. Then we'd walk it back down to the school. But you wouldn't dare do that now, send some kids to the store during a school day.

I remember at recess, it wasn't really planned, but it all

seemed developmental. In first grade, everybody was trying to learn to skip rope. The second graders jumped rope while two people twirled it and sang some kind of song. In third grade, that's when you were big enough to do double dutch. The end of third grade and fourth grade was four square. I can remember being a first grader watching those third graders knowing that I'd get to do that in third grade. We played tag, too. We didn't just do one thing everyday, though. Wall ball was a big thing. You'd throw a big wall up against a wall and you'd have to do something before you caught it again. Jacks, we used to do jacks, and coloring, I did a lot of coloring.

Kids never really got into a lot of trouble in school back then. When I was a kid in school, talking when you weren't supposed to was a big thing, and people didn't usually do it. There wasn't a lot of clowning around going on, and nothing bad was ever really done. There were no drugs, no stealing, no cussing. Kids got in trouble for being just a little mean to each other, and that was it.

I always did fine in school, up through fifth grade. I thought I was one of the smartest kids. After fifth grade, we moved to Delhi, and I started at St. Dominicks. There were so many kids there that I just never felt comfortable, and I really didn't do well in school. When I was a kid at St. John's, and a new kid came to school, it was like everybody was surrounding them and talking to them and wanting to be their friend. That's what I expected, and when I got to this school, it was totally opposite.

It was like they all had their own little cliques and didn't want anyone new around. So, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade were no fun for me at all.

We had to take a test before we went to high school so they could tell us which track we had to be in. They had a general track for just the run of the mill people. They had a business track, which was really just preparing people to be secretaries. The college track was for kids that were smart enough to go to college. Then they had a thing called accelerated which was supposed to be even harder than the college preparatory. Everybody had a meeting at the high school one night with a teacher to find out how you did on this test. At my meeting, the nun said that I didn't do very well on this test, that the best I could expect was to do the general track. It really upset me. I can remember leaving there with my mother and saying, "If you don't at least let me sign up for the business courses, I will not go to high school." So, I ended up signing up for the business track, and that's what I took in high school.

When I was a senior, different businesses would come to the high school and give typing and shorthand tests looking for people to higher as secretaries. If you got a certain score, then they'd invite you to their company. I remember going to visit a couple of places, and I got a job offer from the Hamilton County Welfare Office in a secretarial pool. So, I went to work there for \$67.50 a week.

I started doing that when I got out of high school, and paid

my parents \$20 a week to stay at home. After a year, I decided that I didn't want to be a secretary, that I could do more than that. A high school friend of mine and I decided we were going to take an evening class at UC (University of Cincinnati). We took a beginning psychology class, and I really, really liked that. I knew I wanted to go to college.

Chapter 3

College and Marriage

UC (the University of Cincinnati) had a two year program for being a nursery school, daycare teacher. I decided that was what I wanted to do, so I signed up. My mom and dad were not happy about that. It took some convincing of my folks, but they eventually gave in and approved. They even lent me money to pay for some of it. In college, I did real well. I made dean's list every time but once. At the end of two years, I decided to go two more years, so I could get an elementary license and a kindergarten endorsement. What I really wanted to do was teach kindergarten.

It was my junior year in college when I started dating my husband, Rich. He was my first steady boyfriend. Rich went out with my girlfriend, Joan, for a couple years. I saw him a few times when we'd all go do things together, but I never really got to know him then. Not long after they broke up, I went with another friend of mine to meet him at some bar. A few weeks later, this girl asked if I'd go out with Rich. I said if Joan wasn't

going to be mad, and if he wanted to ask me, I'd go. A little while later, he called me up and asked me to go out, and we set a date on Valentine's Day to go to the Ice Capades.

He asked me out a few more times, and I was kind of deciding I didn't like him. We went on a picnic at a state park with a lot of my friends and their boyfriends, and he was drinking beer. Well, they were all drinking beer, but that really bothered me. For a while after that, we didn't go out. I forget what triggered it again, but after a couple months, he called me and asked me out again. I went out with him, and, I don't know why, but I liked him better that time. We went out for a year, then we got engaged in January or February of '71 before he left for basic training. He came back in August, and we got married in the middle of September.

I received my degree that year, and started teaching. Rich and I moved around a lot because of his transfers with Montgomery Wards. Our last move was to Richmond, Indiana. Right after I had the twins, Rich was transferred to Chicago. We were happy in Richmond, and didn't want to raise a family in Chicago. Luckily, just as we decided we had no choice but to go, Rich was offered a marketing job by Federated Insurance where he's worked for about eighteen years, now. This september, four months after my parents celebrate their 50th anniversary, Rich and I will celebrate twenty five years of marriage.